THE PETITION OF THE LORDS & COMMONS OF PARLIAMENT

Assembled at OXFORD, presented to His MAJESTY the day before the Recesse.

AND

HIS MAIESTIES Gratious Answer to the same.

WITH

His MAJESTIES Protestation formerly made in the Head of His Army, and now again reprinted *at the desire and by the Advice of both Houses.*

CHARLES R.

OVr expresse Pleasure is, That this Petition, with Our Answer and Protestation, be read by the Parson, Vicar or Curate, in every Church and Chappell within Our Kingdom of *England* and Dominion of *Wales*.

Printed by His MAJESTIES Command, at the desire of the Lords and Commons of Parliament Assembled at *Oxford*,

By *Leonard Lichfield*, Printer to the Vniversity. 1644.

TO

The *KINGS* most Excellent MAJESTY.

The humble Petition of the Lords *and* Commons *of* PARLIAMENT *Assembled at* Oxford *according to Your* MAJESTIES *Proclamation.*

WE most humbly acknowledge Your Princely goodneſſe in calling us, to receive our Advices for preſervation of the Religion, Lawes, and ſafety of the Kingdom, and to reſtore it to its former Peace and ſecurity; How earneſtly we have ſought a Peace with Your Majeſties moſt gratious concurrence, doth appeare by the printed Declaration of our proceedings, touching a Treaty for Peace, wherein we aymed at a free & full convention of Parliament, as the moſt hopefull way to unite theſe unhap-

py divisions; And since that hath been refused, we have applyed our Advices for supporting your Armies, the visible means now left for maintaining our Religion, restoring the Lawes, and procuring the safety of the Kingdom: being assured from Your Majesty You doe and will imploy Your Armies to no other end.

And although our selves are most fully satisfied of Your Majesties pious and just resolutions herein, yet because Feares and Iealousies have been, and are malitiously scattered amongst Your Subjects, to poyson their affections, and corrupt their Loyalty to Your Majesty: Therefore, to the end we may be enabled by Your gratious Answer to satisfy all the World, or to leave them unexcusable who will not be satisfied, We do in all humility present to Your Majesty these Petitions;

That Your Majesty will give direction for the reprinting Your Protestation made in the head of Your Army, and Your other Declarations, wherein Your constant Resolution is declared to maintain and defend the true reformed Protestant Religion, and that the same may be with more diligence published amongst the People; that so Your Princely Christian zeale and affection to that Religion, and to maintain the same against all Popery, Schisme, and Prophaneness, may be manifested, and which we beseech Your Majesty upon this our Petition to declare again to all the World, to the discountenance and suppression of those scandalls laid upon Your Majesty by those who disturbe our Peace.

That when there may be a full and free convention

of

of Parliament, a Nationall Synod may be lawfully called, to adviſe of ſome fit meanes for the eſtabliſhing the Government and Peace of our Church; to whom may be recommended a care for the eaſe of the tender Conſciences of Your Proteſtant Subjects.

Touching our Lawes, we cannot ask more of Your Majeſty, then to declare and continue Your former Reſolutions, to hold and keep them inviolable and unalterable, but by Act of Parliament.

And for avoyding the ſcandall malitiouſly infuſed into many of Your Subjects, that if Your Majeſty prevaile againſt this Rebellion, You intend not to uſe the frequent Councell of Parliaments: We humbly Pray and Adviſe Your Majeſty to declare the ſincerity of Your Royall heart therein, to ſatisfy Your ſeduced Subjects againſt ſuch falſe and malitious aſpertions.

And in reſpect the preſent Contributions, Loanes, Taxes, and other Impoſitions for maintenance of Your Armies, have been ſubmitted unto as exigences of Warre and neceſſity, becauſe of this unexampled Rebellion and Invaſion: We humbly beſeech Your Majeſty to Declare, That they ſhall not be drawn into example, nor continue longer then the preſent exigence and neceſſity, nor be at any time mentioned as Preſidents. And that for the farther ſecurity of Your People, Your Majeſty will vouchſafe to promiſe Your Royall aſſent to a Law to be made and declared to that purpoſe in a full and free Convention of Parliament.

And that for the preſent eaſe and encouragement of thoſe under contributions by contract with Your Ma-

jesty, You will be pleased that those contracts may be so observed, that Your Subjects may not have just cause of complaint against the Commanders, Governors, Officers, or Souldiers of Your Army, or of or in any Your Garrisons, Castles, or Forts, for taking any Money, Horses, or other Cattell, Provisions or other goods, or any Timber or Woods of any Your Subjects, or Free-Billet, or Free-Quarter in any place where the Contributions and Taxes agreed on are paid; Humbly beseeching Your Majesties gratious Care herein, and that the Offenders may receive exemplary punishment.

Lastly, that Your Majesty will retaine Your pious endeavours to procure the Peace of this languishing Kingdom, not to be removed or altered by any advantages or prosperous successe.

HIS MAIESTIES GRATIOUS ANSWER To the aforesaid PETITION.

AS We shall alwaies acknowledge the great Comfort and assistance We have received by your Counsells, since your meeting here according to Our Proclamation; so We must give you very particular Thankes for the Expressions you have made in this Petition, of your Confidence in Us; and for the Care you have therein taken, that all Our good Subjects may receive ample satisfaction in those things, upon which the good and Wel-fare of their Condition so much depends.

We

We have long obſerved (though not without wonder) the ſly, ſubtile and groundleſſe Inſinuation infuſed and diſperſed amongſt Our People, by the diſturbers of the publique Peace, of Our favouring and countenancing of Popery: And therefore as in Our conſtant, viſible practice We have, to the utmoſt of Our Power (and We hope ſufficiently) manifeſted the groſſe falſhood of thoſe Imputations and ſcandalls, ſo We have omitted no opportunity of publiſhing to all the world, the cleare Intentions and Reſolutions of Our Soule in that point. We wiſh from Our heart, That the true Reformed Proteſtant Religion may not receive greater Blemiſh by the Actions and Practice of theſe men, then it doth or ſhall by any Connivence of Ours: We will take the beſt care We can (and We deſire your aſſiſtance in it) to publiſh to all Our good Subjects, that Our *Proteſtation*, and thoſe *Declarations* you mention; And We do aſſure you, there is not an expreſsion in either of them, for the maintenance and advancement of Our Religion, with which Our heart doth not fully concurr, and in which We ſhall be ſo conſtant, that if it

ſhall

ſhall not pleaſe God to enable Us by Force to defend it, We ſhall ſhew Our Affection and Love to it by dying for it. We may without vanity ſay, It hath pleaſed God to enlighten Our underſtanding, to decerne the cleer Truth of the *Proteſtant Religion*, in which We have been born & bred, from the Miſts and Clouds of *Popery*, the which (if it hath made any growth or progreſſe of late within the Kingdom, as We hope it hath not) is more beholding to the unchriſtian rage and fury of theſe men, then to any connivance or favour of Ours.

For a Nationall Synod We have often promiſed it, and when God ſhall give ſo much Peace and quiet to this Kingdom, that regular and Lawfull Conventions may be eſteemed, ſhall gladly perform that Promiſe, as the beſt meanes to reeſtabliſh Our Religion, and make up thoſe Breaches which are made; And We ſhall then willingly recommend unto them a ſpeciall care of the eaſe of tender Conſciences of Our Proteſtant Subjects, as We have often expreſſed.

For the Lawes of the Land, We can ſay no

more then We have said in that Protestation you mention, and We thank you for being satisfied with it; In which God knows Our resolution to be so firme and stedfast, that We will give any security under Heaven for the observation of it. And as Our great desire at this present is, to meet in a full and free Convention of Parliament, which We are confident would quickly put an end to all these troubles; so, when it shall please God to restore that blessing to Us, We shall value and esteeme that Councell, and frequently consult with it, and be advis'd by it, as the best meanes to make both King and People truely happy; And We shall then by an Act given wype out the footsteps of those extraordinary Supplies, which nothing but this reall visible necessity, which oppresses us all, could have compelled Us to make use of, and which shall never be mentioned or remembred by Us, to the least Prejudice of your Rights and Liberties. And in the meantime, We shall leave nothing undone for the observation of particular contracts, and prevention of the disorder and licence of the Souldiers, which is in Our Power to do, no par-

ticular Perſon enduring half that ſadneſſe of heart for thoſe Breaches and Preſſures, which We Our ſelf do. For the prevention and ſuppreſsion whereof We ſhall proceed with all Rigour and Severity.

Laſtly, As the ſupport and maintenance of the Religion, Lawes, and Priviledges of Parliament, is (as you well know) the onely Argument of Our defenſive Armes; ſo thoſe being ſecured, We ſhall with all imaginable Joy lay down thoſe Armes; and as you have been Our Witneſſes and Our Aſsiſtants in Our earneſt deſires of Peace, ſo We promiſe you, We ſhall not onely with the ſame earneſtneſſe alwaies imbrace it, if it ſhall be offered, but purſue and preſſe it upon the leaſt likelyhood or Opportunity. And this Our Reſolution, by Gods Bleſsing, ſhall never be altered by any Advantages or proſperous Succeſſe.

His

HIS MAIESTIES Protestation.

I Do promise in the presence of Almighty God, and as I hope for his blessing & protection, That I will, to the utmost of my Power, defend and maintain the true reformed Protestant Religion established in the Church of England, and by the grace of God in the same will live and dye.

I desire to govern by the known Lawes of the Land, and that the Liberty and Property of the Subject may be by them preserved with the same care as my owne just Rights: & if it please God by his blessing upon this Army raised for my necessary defence, to preserve me fro this Rebellion, I do solemnly & faithfully promise, in the sight of God, to maintain the just Priviledges & freedom of Parliament, and to govern by the knowne Lawes of the Land, to my utmost Power; and particularly to observe inviolably the Lawes consented to by me this Parliament. In the mean while, if this time of War, and the great necessity and straits I am now driven to, beget any violation of those, I hope it shall be imputed by God and Man to the Authors of this War, and not to me, who have so earnestly laboured for the preservation of the Peace of this Kingdom.

When I willingly faile in these particulars, I will expect no Aid or Relief from any man, or Protection from Heaven: But in this Resolution I hope for the cheerfull assistance of all good men, and am confident of Gods Blessing.

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